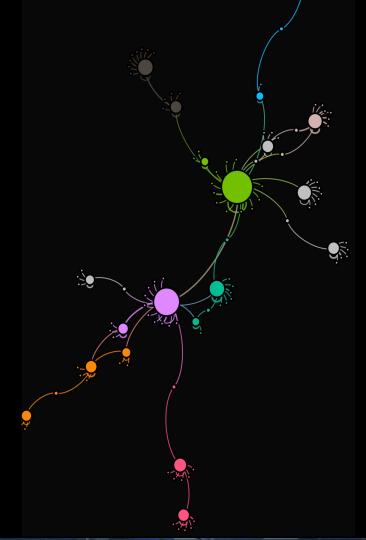


The RCN-UBE solicitation (NSF 18-510)

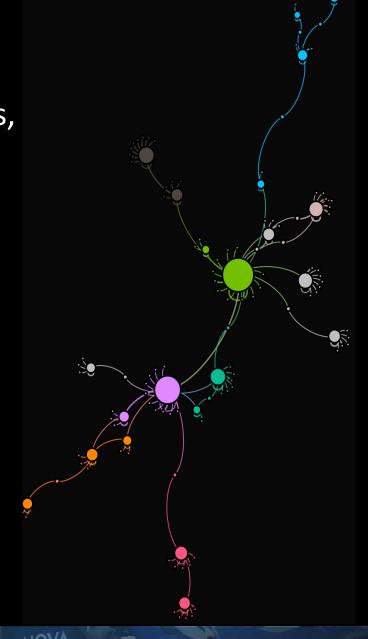
- The RCN-UBE program accepts:
 - Full proposals: up to \$500,000 for up to five years;
 15-page (maximum) project description.
 - Incubator proposals: up to \$75,000 for one year; 8page (maximum) project description.
 - Meant to support the initial formation of (i.e., "incubate") a network.
 - A full proposal doesn't need to be preceded by an Incubator (but many do).





RCN-UBE Program

- Supports the creation of networks of scientists, educators, and other stakeholders that collaboratively address a common problem in undergraduate biology education (the theme of the proposal)
 - The problem must be shared by all network members solving the problem should benefit the wider community
 - RCN-UBE awards do not support existing networks.
- A (research) collaboration is not a network.
- One institution or member cannot not drive the network—awards cannot be used to coordinate the research of an individual or propagate an intervention developed at an institution.





Budget Considerations

Fifty percent of the budget will be participant support costs

Network members should be supported in an equitable way

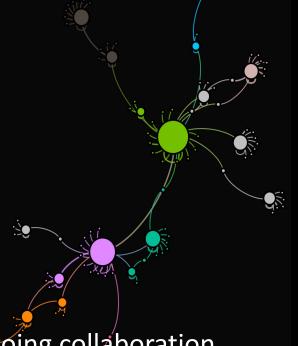
Funds can be used to support travel and/or meetings to

- share information;
- coordinate planned educational research;
- synthesize knowledge; and/or
- develop community standards and assessments.

Funds can also be used to pay for

- The Pl's/Co-Pls' time;
- Support staff; e.g., a coordinator who organizes network activities;
- Infrastructure (e.g., establishment of a public website) to support ongoing collaboration, outreach, and dissemination;
- Students (but only to a limited extent)—RCN-UBEs are networks of faculty and other professionals

Funds cannot be used to support the research collaborations





Potential Themes (not inclusive or limiting)

- Active learning
- Course-based research experiences at all levels
- Interdisciplinary training
- Training students on new equipment/technologies
- Quantitative reasoning, computational biology
- Biological literacy for non-majors
- Bioeconomies and industries for the future
- Interventions that help transfer students be successful
- Assessment
- Engaging underrepresented students
- Community college involvement
- Professional development

Ш	Primary area of emphasis								
	Professional development	Specific Skills	Assessment	Community College involvement	× × Engaging students in Learning	× × Broadening Participation	Curriculum	Interdisciplinary training	Total No. of categories
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← Search for more funding opportunities



Important Information for Proposers

A revised version of the *NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide* (PAPPG) (NSF 22-1), is effective for proposals submitted, or due, on or after October 4, 2021. Please be advised that, depending on the specified due date, the guidelines contained in NSF 22-1 may apply to proposals submitted in response to this funding opportunity.

1. First Google hit for "NSF RCN-UBE" 2. Scroll down to the bottom of the page

Sophie George	sgeorge@nsf.gov	(703) 292-7192	BIO/DBI
Mary Crowe	mcrowe@nsf.gov	(703) 292-7177	EHR/DUE

Program Webinars

2021 RCN-UBE Webinar - October 14, 2021

2021 RCN-UBE Webinar - October 15, 2021

Awards Made Through This Program

Browse projects funded by this program

Map of recent awards made through this program

> Organization(s)

Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO)

Division of Biological Infrastructure (BIO/DBI)

Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR)





Recent Awards (cont.)

RCN-UBE Incubator: NEWT: Network Exploring Wildlife Trade

Award Number:2018428; Principal Investigator:Nancy Karraker; Co-Principal Investigator:Christina Romagosa, Meredith Gore, Jennifer Sevin; Organization:University of Rhode Island;NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:12/01/2020; Award Amount:\$70,961.00; Relevance:48.0;

RCN-UBE: PULSE Ambassadors - Creating a National Leadership Network to Accelerate Departmental Transformation towards Vision and Change Award Number:1624182; Principal Investigator:Alix Fink; Co-Principal Investigator:C. Reiness, Michael Kelrick, Nitya Jacob; Organization:Longwood University;NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:10/01/2016; Award Amount:\$499,978.00; Relevance:48.0;

RCN-UBE: Transforming Ecology Education to Four Dimensional Network

Award Number:2120678; Principal Investigator:Teresa Mourad; Co-Principal Investigator:George Middendorf; Organization:Ecological Society of America; NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:11/01/2021; Award Amount:\$499,700.00; Relevance:48.0;

RCN-UBE Incubator: Building the San Francisco Bay Network for Student Opportunities in Avian Research to enhance STEM education and assess urban impacts on avian ecology

Award Number: 2017935; Principal Investigator: Anthony Barnosky; Co-Principal Investigator:; Organization: Stanford University; NSF Organization: DBI Start Date: 10/01/2020; Award Amount: \$74,157.00; Relevance: 48.0;

RCN-UBE Incubator: The Biological and Environmental Data Education Network

Award Number:1827082; Principal Investigator:Andrew Kerkhoff; Co-Principal Investigator:Matthew Aiello-Lammens, Sarah Supp, Susy Echeverria-Londono; Organization:Kenyon College;NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:10/01/2018; Award Amount:\$72,361.00; Relevance:48.0;

RCN-UBE Incubator: Preparing a Network to Develop Molecular Case Studies at the Interface of Biology and Chemistry

Award Number:1827011; Principal Investigator:Shuchismita Dutta; Co-Principal Investigator:David Marcey, Patricia Marsteller, Kimberly Cortes, Cassidy Terrell; Organization:Rutgers University New Brunswick; NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:10/01/2018; Award Amount:\$75,000.00; Relevance:48.0;

RCN-UBE Incubator: Creating a More inclusive Biology Curriculum

Award Number: 2018693; Principal Investigator: Sarah Eddy; Co-Principal Investigator: Linda Fuselier, Anne Marie Casper, Susan Jarosi; Organization: Florida International University; NSF Organization: DBI Start Date: 12/01/2020; Award Amount: \$69,003.00; Relevance: 48.0;

RCN-UBE Incubator: Building a framework for the River-based ImmersiVe Education & Research (RIVER) Field Studies Network

Award Number:1919737; Principal Investigator:James Vonesh; Co-Principal Investigator:Denielle Perry, Andy Rost; Organization:Virginia Commonwealth University;NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:10/01/2019; Award Amount:\$74,968.00; Relevance:48.0;

Collaborative Research: Building reflective scientists: Linking course-based authentic research experiences to develop metacognitive skills and scientific fluency

Award Number:1612252; Principal Investigator:Caroline Dahlberg; Co-Principal Investigator:David Leaf; Organization:Western Washington University;NSF Organization:DUE Start Date:09/01/2016; Award Amount:\$300,000.00; Relevance:48.0;

Alaska Undergraduate Research Experience: Partnering for Alaska Students by Growing Recruitment and Retention through Undergraduate Research

Award Number: 2019233; Principal Investigator: Rachael Hannah; Co-Principal Investigator: Alison Gardell, Erin Larson, Cindy Trussell; Organization: University of Alaska Anchorage Campus; NSF Organization: DBI Start Date: 10/01/2020; Award Amount: \$74,450.00; Relevance: 48.0;

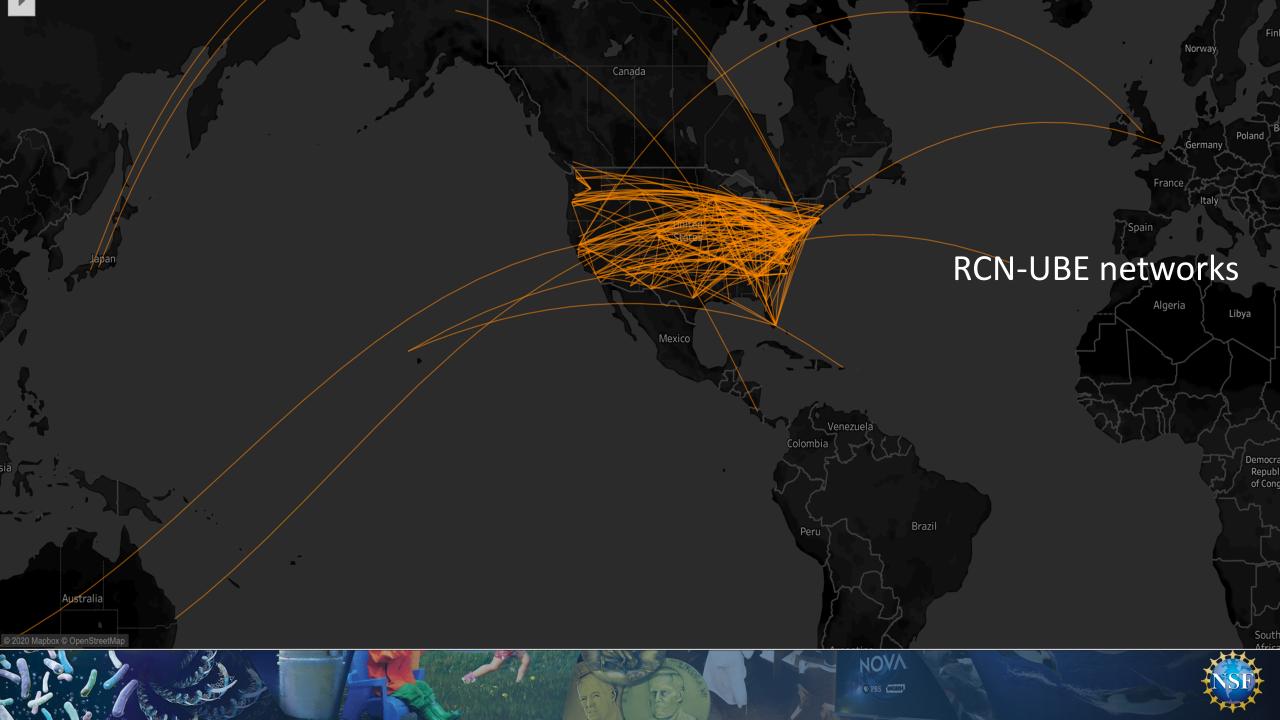
RCN-UBE: Development of an Inclusive Community for the Instruction of Visualizing Biomolecules

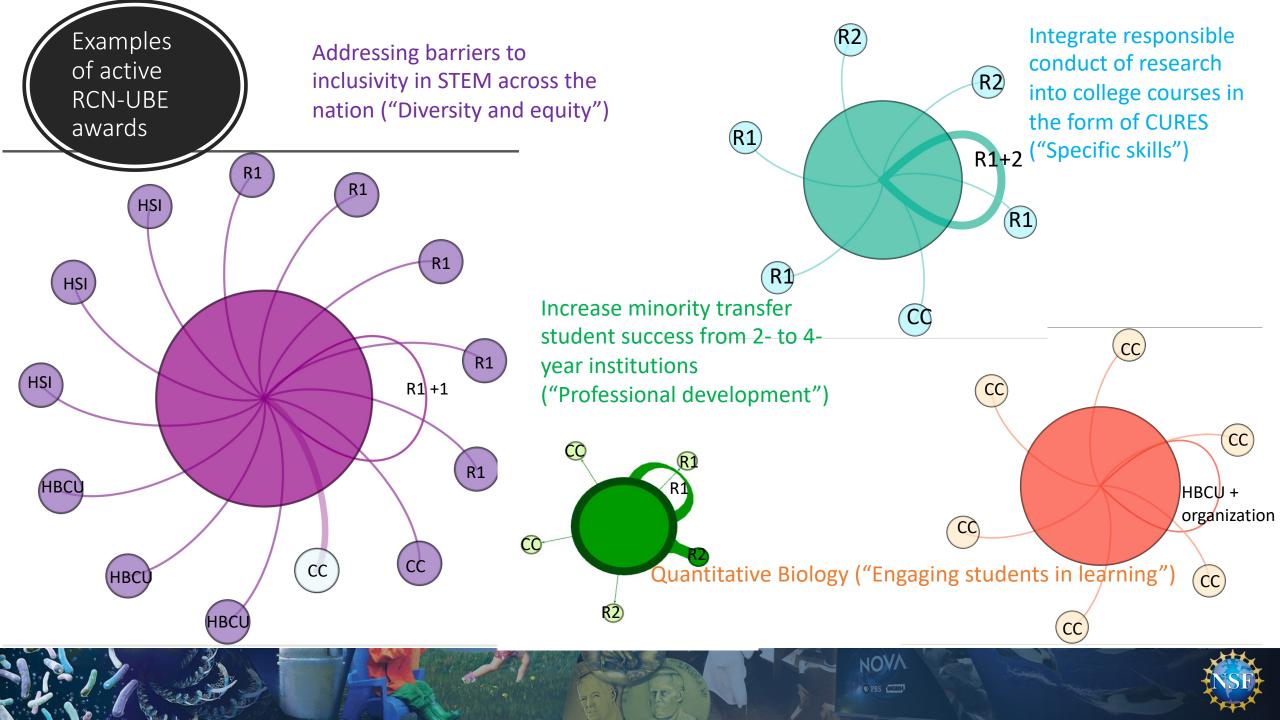
Award Number:1920270; Principal Investigator:Josh Beckham; Co-Principal Investigator:Daniel Dries, Kristen Procko; Organization:University of Texas at Austin; NSF Organization:DBI Start Date:09/01/2019; Award Amount:\$536,489.00; Relevance:48.0;

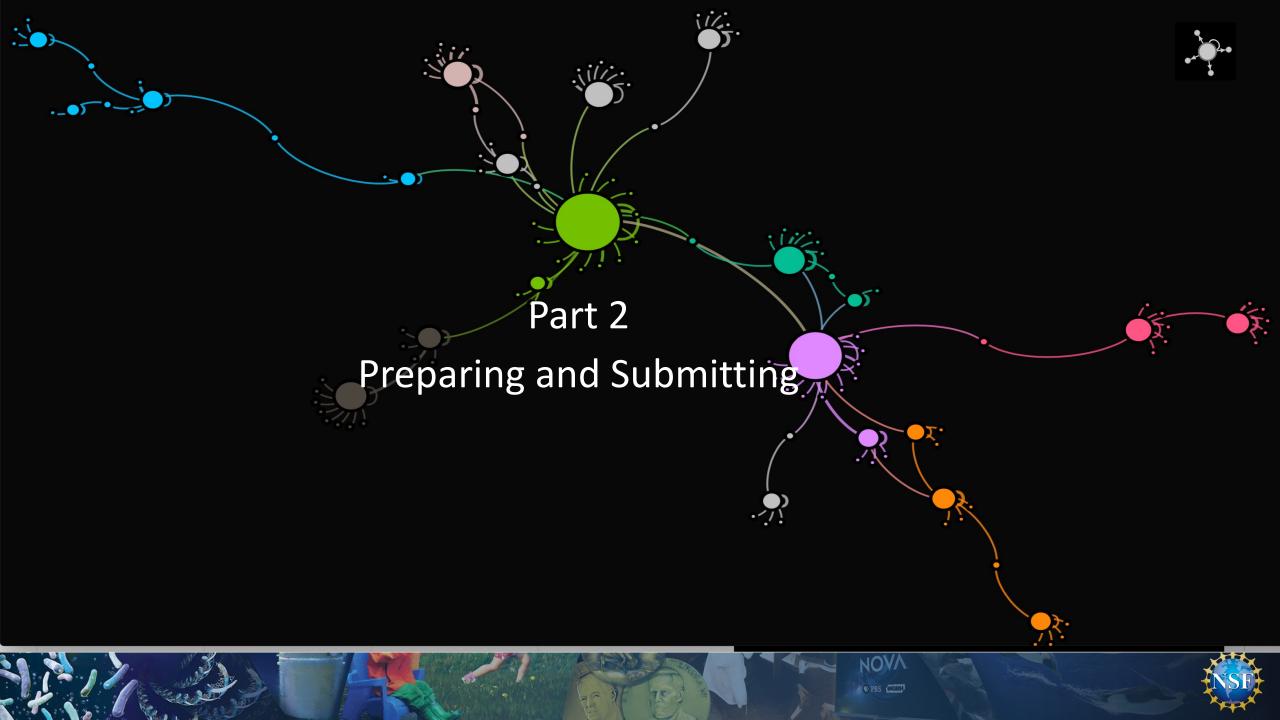
Go to the dropdown menu "Relevance" and click on "Award Title" Most of the RCN-UBE Incubator awards will be on the first page

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505495&org=BIO&from=home









Eligibility

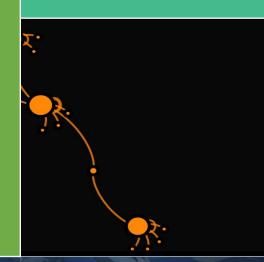
RCN-UBE proposals may be submitted by:

• Universities and two- and four-year colleges (including community colleges) accredited in, and having a campus located in, the US acting on behalf of their faculty members ("academic institutions").

 Non-profit, non-academic organizations: independent museums, observatories, research labs, professional societies, and similar organizations in the U.S. associated with educational or research activities. There are no restrictions on the number of proposals per organization

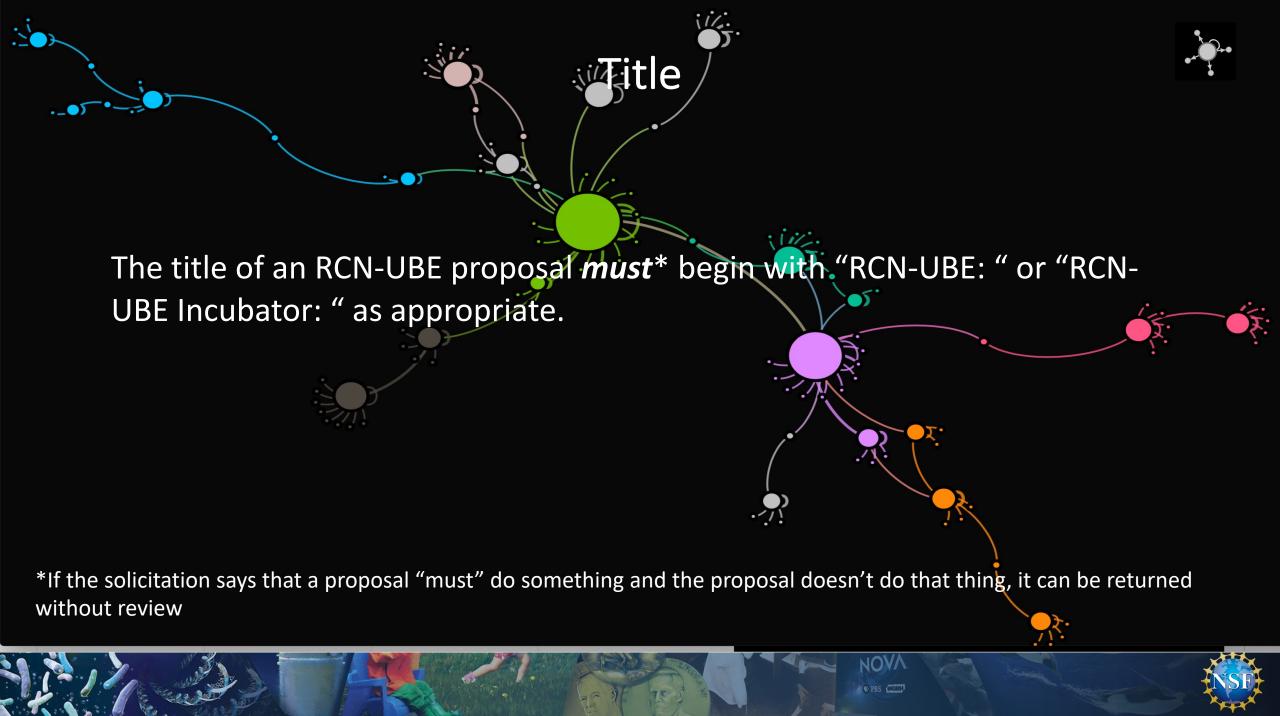
Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI:

• An individual may be listed as a PI or co-PI on no more than one full proposal.









parts:

Project Summary

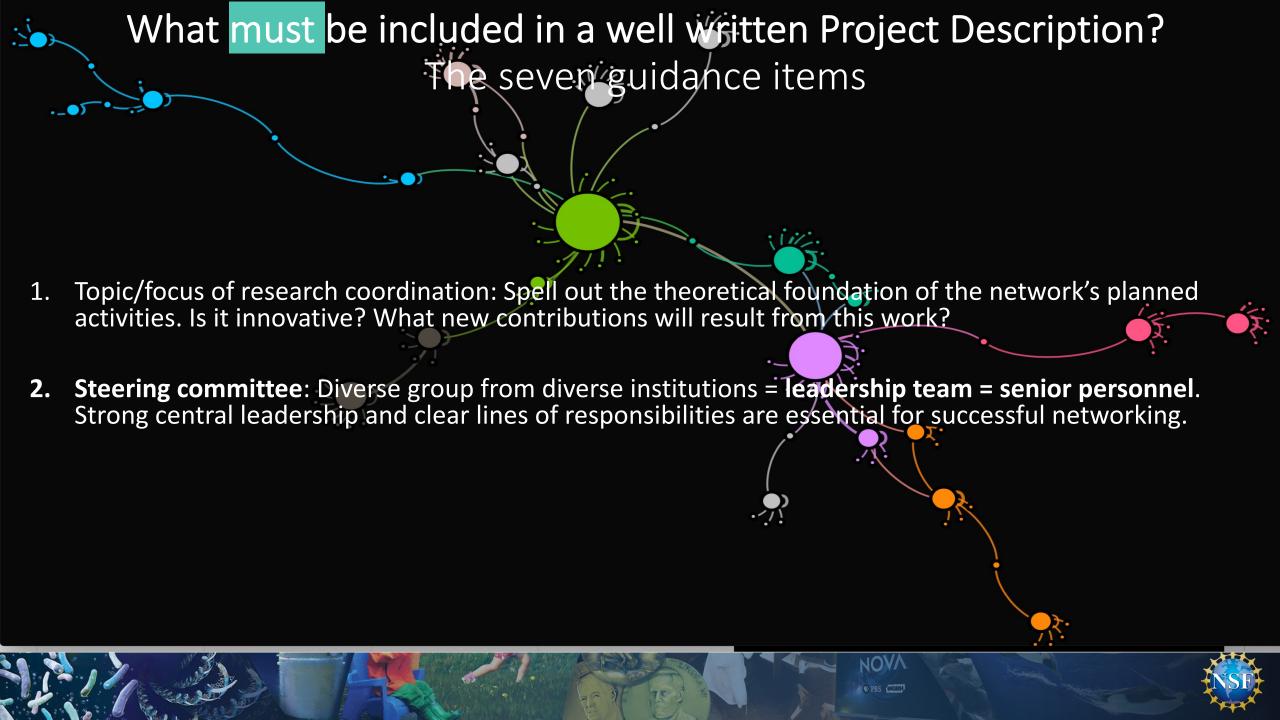
Three parts:

- Overview that includes a description of the proposed RCN-UBE theme, activities and objectives, and a *listing* of each of the steering committee members along with their home organizations.
- Intellectual Merit of the proposed RCN-UBE project, indicating how it will advance biology education and integrate education and research.
- Broader Impacts of the proposed work, including mechanisms for actively promoting participation by all interested parties.

The Project Summary should be written in the third person, informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, and, insofar as possible, understandable to a scientifically or technically literate lay reader.

*If the solicitation says that a proposal "must" do something and the proposal doesn't do that thing, it can be returned without review (RWR; more later)





Steering committee = Leadership team = Senior Personnel

Co-PI Co-PI Co-PI Co-PI

PΙ

Steering committee member member

Steering committee

Steering Steering committee committee member member

Steering committee member

Network participant

COVER SHEET FOR PROPOSAL TO THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOLINDATION

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What is the role of the network participant?

Ы

Co-PI Co-PI Co-PI

Steering committee member

Network participant Network participant

Network participant

Network participant

Network participant

Network participant

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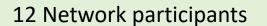
Network participant

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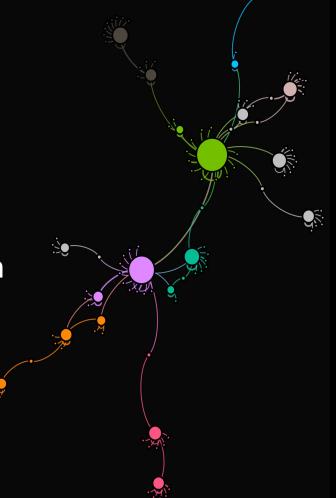
What must be included in a well written Project Description? The seven guidance items

- 3. Network participants: network size, diversity, location, scalability and sustainability etc.
- 4. Coordination/management mechanism: The proposal should include a clearly defined management plan. The plan should describe the specific roles and responsibilities of the PI and the steering committee. Will you be coordinating activities with existing networks?
- **5. Information and material sharing**: The goals of this program are to promote effective **communication** and to **enhance opportunities for collaboration**, therefore, increasing the visibility of your network by developing a website hosted on a well-established platform (e.g., QUBEShub, CUREnet, etc.) is a necessity.
- 6. International participation: NSF encourages international collaboration
- 7. Who submits the proposal? One proposal submitted by the PI at the lead institution with subawards administered by the lead institution.

This is an important opportunity for encouraging the involvement of investigators from underrepresented groups (women, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities), early-career investigators, and investigators from different types of organizations. The proposal should:

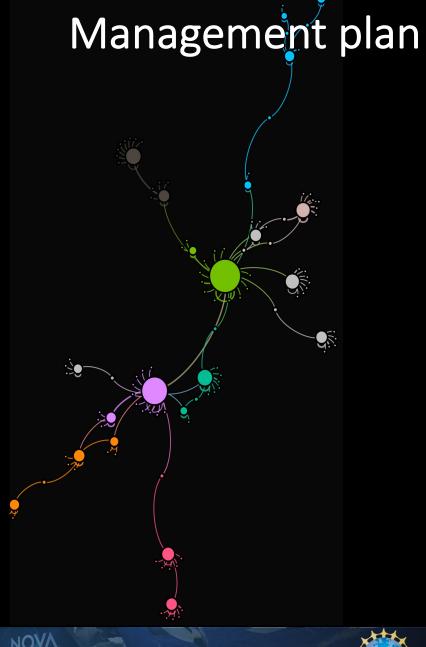
- (1) integrate DEI within the proposed project plan;
- (2) contain a well-designed plan to increase participation of members of under-represented groups
- (3) involve investigators at a variety of institution types in an equitable manner; and
- (4) if applicable, include different faculty employment streams (e. g. adjunct faculty members, teaching faculty), post-docs, and graduate students.

Increasing Diversity.



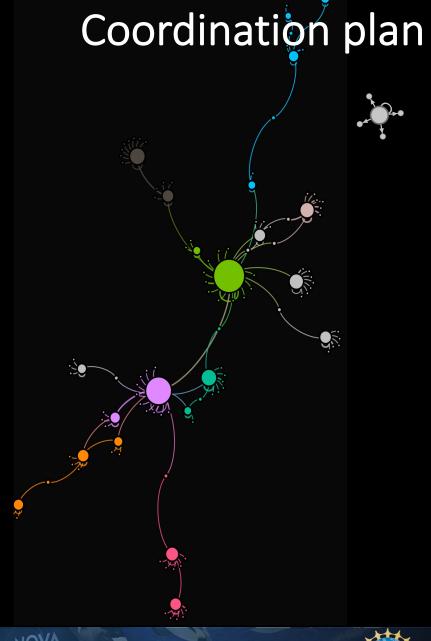


- Mechanisms for allocating funds, such as support for the work of the steering committee, should be clearly articulated.
- Include formal mechanisms to ensure fair and equitable allocation of group resources.
- The procedures used for the **selection of initial network participants**,
- The plans for maintaining an appropriate degree of openness and for continually encouraging the involvement of additional interested parties should be clearly delineated.
- The plan should include provisions for **flexibility** to allow the structure of the participant group to change over time as membership and the network's foci evolve.
- There may be an **advisory committee**. If one is included, the members, roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee should be clearly articulated.
- Means for self-evaluation of progress toward the network goals should be presented as an important part of the management plan.





- PIs are **strongly encouraged** to communicate and interact with other established networks.
- If the proposed network will interface with an established network or group, or if there is a similar activity being planned or ongoing, the plans for coordination and cooperation among the relevant networks must be described in detail.
- Incubator proposals must also determine whether there are similar existing activities to what they are proposing.
- PIs are encouraged to do a search of funded NSF RCN-UBE projects to help identify other networks to connect with. For more information on funded NSF RCN-UBE projects, see https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/simpleSearchResult?queryText=RCN-UBE





Evaluation and Assessment Plans

- An appropriate evaluation plan should be included for all projects, along with project personnel dedicated to the evaluation of project activities.
- The metrics used to measure success toward the goals of the project (both Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts) should be identified and the process for their collection and evaluation provided.
- The assessment plan should detail the ways in which the network activities and products will be assessed.
- For all full proposals, evaluation and assessment plans must be conducted by an external evaluator who is unaffiliated with the network. For incubator proposals, evaluation activities may be conducted by an evaluator internal to any of the steering committee members' institutions. For both cases, a brief description of the qualifications of the evaluator is required. Note that none of the members of the steering committee can serve as the evaluator.



What are some of the other important components of the solicitation that must be included?



• Sustainability plan for all full proposals: provide details on how the project will be sustained beyond the life of the award.

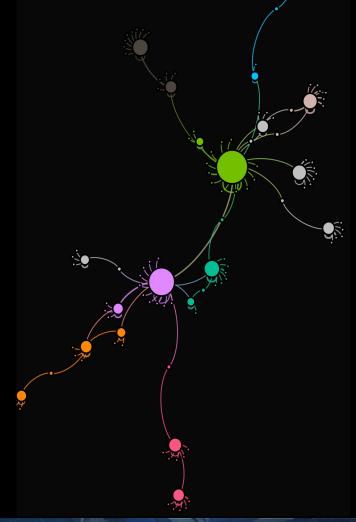
• Include strategies to advance the expansion and sustainability of the network such as pursuing funding sources within and beyond NSF.



Project Description summary:

In Summary:

- Be assessed and evaluated (activities and products).
- Engage its partners, grow, evolve and be sustained;
- Identify metrics and contribute to infrastructure beyond traditional products (such as papers, modules).
- Increase diversity (career stage, ethnic, and racial)
- Develop a website to increase the visibility of the network and for dissemination of products etc. (QUBES, CUREnet, etc.)
- "Results from Prior Support" Only necessary if the proposed activity is clearly a logical extension of an activity supported by NSF

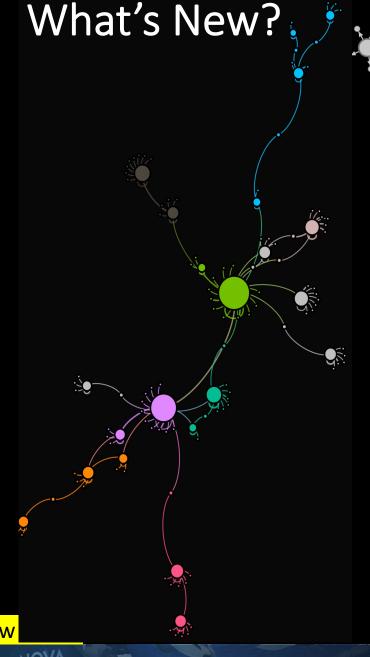




Limit on Number of Proposals per PI or Co-PI:

- An individual may be listed as a PI or co-PI on no more than **one full proposal**.
- An "Online Learning" and an "Evaluation and Assessment" **section should now be** included in **all** full and incubator proposals.
- A "Management Plan" and "Coordination Plan" **must be** included in all Full proposals and **an abbreviated form** of these plans is required **in incubator proposals.**
- Sustainability Plan for all full proposals. How will the network be sustained over time?

 Returned without review





- The PI should calculate the costs for
- A. Senior Personnel (1 through 5)
- B. Other Personnel (6)
- C. Fringe benefits
- D. Equipment
- E. Travel for senior personnel
- F. Participant Support (1 through 4)
- G. Other direct Costs (1 through 6)
- H. Total Direct Costs (A through G)
- I. Indirect Costs

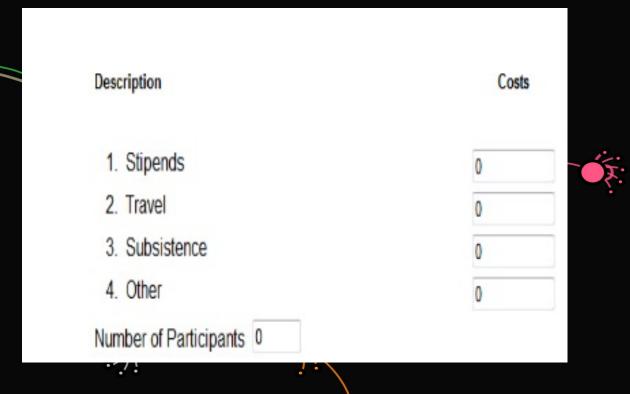
Every dollar should be tied to the project description the description and budget are mutually dependent on each other.

Select Yr

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ORGANIZATION SUMMARY PROPOSAL BUDGET	PRO	POSAL N	10.	DURATION (MONTH					
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49.9% of A+B+C+E+G(first \$25,000 of G5 only)				63					
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ORG. REP. TYPED NAME & SIGNATURE* Select Here	DATE	Date C	hecked	Date	of Rate Sheet	Initials-ORG			

- Not for support of senior personnel
- Funds cannot be transferred out of this category without NSF approval
- You should always specify the total number of participants

Participant Support Costs





When is the Submission Deadline and are there changes to the PAPPG?

• 25 January 2022

(The third Tuesday in January)

Proposals must be received by 5:00 p.m. submitter's local time on the due date.

For changes to the PAPPG:

https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappg22 1/sigchanges.jsp

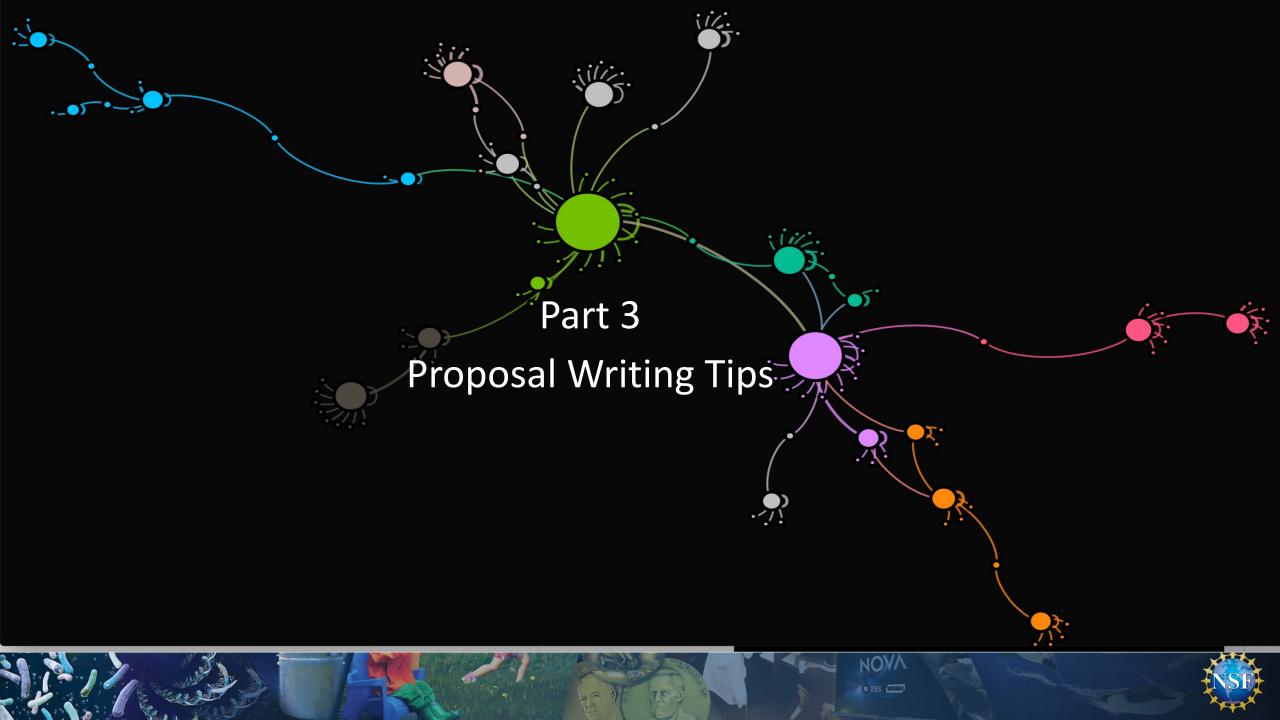


Where do I submit my proposal?

Proposals can be submitted using either Research.gov or Grants.gov







A few suggestions

- Bring all your partners into the planning process early as true collaborators with a shared and unifying vision;
- 2) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Include diverse partners and institutions as equitable partners;
- 3) Make room in the **budget for a coordinator of network activities and for assessment**;
- Be purposeful in engaging partners through regular communication and virtual platforms;
- 5) invite other disciplines to participate in the use, evaluation, and dissemination of RCN-UBE findings, especially in reaching out to diverse participants for RCN activities—explore participation and motivation from the perspective of the diverse audience, not from the perspective of a need for diverse participants.



What Makes a Proposal Competitive?

- Aligns with the solicitation
- Original ideas
- Succinct, focused project plan (Cite the literature)
- Realistic amount of work; i.e., doable in the time and with the resources proposed
- Sufficient detail provided
- Cost-effective
- High-impact
- Knowledge and experience of PIs
- Contribution to the field
- Rationale and evidence of potential effectiveness
- Likelihood the project will be sustained
- Solid evaluation plan with timelines and benchmarks.



General Tips for Success



- Write to the solicitation: Read the solicitation. Read the solicitation again.
- E-mail a cognizant NSF program officer and set up a time to talk; send them a **one- page project summary** (you will have to write it anyway).
- Attend Office hours.
- Be aware of other projects and advances in the field.
- Discuss prior (NSF) results (within last 5 years).
- Put yourself in the reviewers' place.
- If resubmitting, briefly discuss how you've addressed the concerns of the previous review.
- Have someone else read the proposal.



Ten Fatal Flaws

- 1. Assume deadlines are not enforced
- 2. Assume page limits and font size restrictions don't matter
- 3. Substitute flowery rhetoric for good examples
- 4. Don't check your **speeling nore you're grammer**
- 5. Assume program guidelines have not changed, or better yet, ignore them
- 6. Assert evaluation will be ongoing and consist of a variety of methods
- 7. Assume a website is sufficient for dissemination
- 8. Assume your past accomplishments are well known
- **9. Provide letters of support** rather than **letters of collaboration** or commitment (see solicitation page 8 for template).
- 10. Inflate your budget to allow for negotiations



Return without Review

- A proposal may be returned without review if it does not meet the **requirements** of the PAPPG and/or the solicitation.
- Examples:
 - Missing explicit Intellectual Merit section (narrative)
 - Missing explicit Broader Impacts section (narrative)
 - An incubator proposal that is > 8 pages.
 - No steering committee
 - Steering committee members not listed in the Project Summary





Resources

- NSF 18-510?: RCN-UBE Solicitation
- NSF 22-1: NSF Proposal and Awards Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG)
- Vision and Change in Undergraduate Biology Education: Chronicling Change, Inspiring the Future (http://visionandchange.org/files/2015/07/VISchange2015_webFin.pdf)
- CBE-Life Sciences Education, https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.16-03-0147
- https://seedfund.nsf.gov/fastlane/budget-changes/

Example of an RCN-UBE project website:

https://qubeshub.org/community/groups/qbcc/qb_modules

Example of large platforms that host several RCN-UBE websites:

- https://qubeshub.org
- https://serc.carleton.edu/curenet/index.html (go to CURE Collection)



New BIO-DBI programs

1. The BRC-BIO program (NSF 22-500):

- supports new faculty who are within the first 3 years of an appointment by enabling them to initiate sustainable research programs at this critical early career stage.
- targets institutions and their faculty that are currently poorly represented among the institutions submitting proposals to and receiving awards from BIO. This includes Predominantly Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs), Minority-serving Institutions (MSIs) that are not among the nation's most research-intensive institutions, and other institutions that are classified as R2, D, ML, MM, and MS
- BRC-BIO awards can be up to \$500,000, that is, \$450,000 +\$50,000 for equipment

2. Mid Career Advancement (MCA) program (NSF 21-516):

- provides a means for scientists and engineers at the <u>Associate Professor</u> rank (or equivalent) to substantively enhance and advance their research program through synergistic and mutually beneficial partnerships, typically at an institution other than their home institution.
- Partners from outside the PI's own sub-discipline or discipline are encouraged, but not required, to enhance interdisciplinary networking and convergence across science and engineering fields.
- the acquisition of additional scientific or technical expertise is encouraged
- Funds for the PI include up to a total of 6.5 months of salary + an additional \$100,000 for other direct costs in support of the research advancement and training plan.



